

nes erant duorum graduum. Non conquevit acus
ante meridiem diei sequentis.

Sed te jam nimis diu detinui, vir æstumatissime ;
ideoque heic subsistens me tuae amicitiae tuoque favori
etiam atque etiam commendo. Vale.

Stockholmiae, calendis Maii,
1750.

**XVIII. An Extract of a Letter, dated May
2, 1750, from Mr. Freeman at Naples,
to the right honourable the Lady Mary Capel,
relating to the Ruins of Herculaneum.**

Read Feb. 28.

YOU remember, that, about 7 or 8 years
1750. ago, the discovery of Herculaneum
was greatly talk'd of, and reported to have been swal-
low'd up by a violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius ;
which, by the most accurate accounts, was in the
first year of the reign of the emperor Titus, and 79
years after Christ.

The situation of this antient city is, as it were, at
the foot of Vesuvius near the sea, and just at one end
of the village of Portici, the palace of the king of
Naples's summer residence ; and, I dare say, a great
part of the city is under the said village.

I was first conducted down a narrow passage,
which they have dug wide enough barely for two
persons to pass by each other ; and descended, by a
gradual slope, to the depth of about 65 feet perpen-
dicular. Here I saw a great part of the ancient thea-
tre, being a building in the form of an horseshoe.
That part of it, where is supposed to be the orchestra

R 2 and

and stage, was not so cleared out, as to be distinctly seen: the other, where the spectators sat, is very visible, and consists of 18 rows of broad stone seats, one above another, in a semicircular form, and are sufficiently wide to place the feet of those, who sit behind each other; so that they may be said to be both seats and footstools. Altho' this theatre is not emptied of the matter or earth, that filled it, yet they have dug quite round the exterior part, by which one may judge of its spaciousness. At certain proper distances, within the circuit of the seats, thro' the whole range, from bottom to top, are little narrow flights of steps, by which the spectators might come to, or go from, their seats commodiously, without crowding. These steps or stairs also lead up, in a strait line, to a sort of gallery, several feet wide, which ranges all round the outside of the theatre, and which is called the precinct; above which there are other stairs, which lead to a second. By this precinct it is judged, that the theatre, with the orchestra, must be about 52 or 53 feet diameter.

I observed, going round the theatre, several large square pilasters, equally distant from each other; and which, doubtless, supported the whole edifice. These pilasters are of a thin compact red brick, adorned with marble cornices. The pavement of this theatre must have been very beautiful, by the different-colour'd marble, that has been taken out of it, and some that remains. In short, by the broken pieces of cornices, mouldings, and carved work, and the many fragments of pillars, &c. which have been found within and without the theatre, it appears to have been a most magnificent edifice.

There

There are two principal gates to the theatre, with inscriptions on the architraves, which are taken out, and placed in the king's palace, among the other curiosities. Those, who have the care of all, will not suffer one to copy any thing: however I lagged a little behind the rest of the company, and copied, from the perfectest of the two architraves, the following inscription;

LANNIVS.MAMMIANVS.
RVFVS.II.VIR.QVINQ.
THEATR.OP.NVMISIVS.
P.F.ARCH.EC....

The antiquarians will have it, that Mammianus Rufus, who was one of the duumvirs, built the theatre at his own expence. There are numbers of other inscriptions, some perfect, others imperfect; which latter is owing, I suppose, to the little care taken in digging them out.

It is a great pity, that they did not, at the first discovery, open the ground at the top, and clear it away as they worked, in order to have seen those fine things in open day-light. But I have been told, it was impossible, seeing the vast depth of earth and stone they must have been obliged to have made way thro'. That reason does not all satisfy me; they having slaves enough, of the rascally and villainous sort, to complete such a work. What a fine thing would it have been to have come directly down to the roof of the building, instead of digging round, and to have found all things in their first situation!

I come

I come now to mention another opening, distant from that, which leads to the theatre, by which they have made a way into some houses. Here they seem to have dug infinitely more than about the theatre ; for one may ramble, as in a labyrinth, for, at least, half a mile. I cannot be very particular in describing the many things, that have been dug out of either of the two places ; but the most noted you shall have, as far as my memory will permit, besides those, which I took down in my pocket-book on the spot. The first were many parts of broken horses, with part of a triumphal car or chariot, all of gilt bronze ; and which, they say, was placed over one of the gates of the theatre.

The next were two equestrian statues, which were found on each side of one of the said gates, and, they suppose, fronting a street, that led to the theatre. Those, I was told, were erected in honour of the two Balbi's, father and son, as having been great benefactors to the Herculaneans. One of these statues is so broken, that it cannot be repair'd ; the other, which happen'd to be better preserved, is extremely well repair'd, and is set up under the piazza in the gate-way of the king's palace at Portici. On the front of the pedestal is seen the following inscription, as it was found ;

M. NOMIO MF
BALBO
PR. PRO COS.
HERCVLANENSES

It is certainly a most beautiful statue, and is judg'd, by all connoisseurs, to be one of the best in the world. I must own, I never saw so much life express'd in any figure I have seen. Not far from it, at the bottom of the palace stair-case, is fixed another beautiful statue of the emperor Vitellius, very perfect and intire: another statue of Nero, with a thunderbolt in his hand: another of Vespasian: one of Claudius: one of Germanicus: two other beautiful statues, sitting; but I could not learn whom they represented. There are many others, some of marble, some of bronze, all bigger than life; and even some gigantic, or colossal: many without heads, or arms, and others so destroy'd, as never to be repair'd. Of busto's there are several; some very beautiful, as that of Jupiter Ammon, Neptune, Mercury, Juno, Ceres, Pallas, &c. In the apartments of the palace are a vast number of little statues, many of which are extremely beautiful: also a great number of little idols, tripods, lachrymatories, and many vases curiously wrought. Among these is a whole loaf of bread burnt to a coal: they will not suffer any one to touch it. It is cover'd with a glass bell, thro' which I perceived letters on the loaf, which possibly were the baker's mark; and, examining them with attention, they stood thus;

S ILIGO. CRANII E CISER

The man, who shew'd the curiosities, told us, that several had attempted to explain this mark, but could not

not make it out ; which, I believe, was owing to the first word. The S, they imagined, signified a word by it self ; as it stands a little wide from the letters, that follow, and to which I judge that S ought to be joined to form SILIGO, which signifies fine flour ; of which the bread might be made, with the mixture of flour of chich-pease or vetch, which I think ECISER signifies. CRANII I take to be the baker's name. Whether I am right or not, I cannot say ; but the man seem'd to approve of the explanation, and said he would communicate it to the king. There are many other valuable curiosities, which I could not see, being lock'd up in the king's closet, and private apartments ; such as medals, intaglia's, and cameo's.

I come now to mention some of the pictures, which were found. Some of them were taken out of a temple near the theatre, others from the houses. They have all preserv'd their colours to admiration ; which are very lively. They are painted in fresco, and were sawed out of the walls, not without a great deal of trouble and care ; and are now fixed, with binding morter, or cement, in shallow wooden cases, to prevent their breaking, and varnish'd over, to preserve their colours. You must think, that these pictures are not alike valuable, otherwise than from their antiquity ; some doubtless having been done by good hands, others by bad, as one sees by the works of those now-a-days. I shall therefore only mention some of the best. There are two large ones, as big as life, which were taken out of the temple, which I mentioned, and which, as the antiquarians will have it, was dedicated to Bacchus ; proving it by some other

other particular things found in the said temple. One of these pictures, they say, represents Theseus. The figure is naked, and holds a small club in his hand: between his legs lies a minotaur the posture of which produces one of the most admirable foreshortenings, that ever I beheld. There stand about him also three little boys, one of which kisses his right hand, another embraces his left arm, and the third gently embraces his left hand; all extremely well expressed. The other picture is of the same size as the former, and composed of many figures as large as the life. 1. A woman sitting with a wand in her hand, and crown'd with flowers: on one side of her stands a basket of pomegranates, grapes, and other fruit: near her is a little satyr or fawn, playing on one of the ancient instruments, of 6 or 8 tubes, joined together in a row. There is a lusty naked man standing by her, with his face turned something towards her, with a short black beard. He has a bow and quiver of arrows; also a club. In the same piece is also another woman, who seemingly is talking to the first: she is crown'd with ears of corn. There is also a hind giving suck to a boy. The man told me, that this represented the story of the discovery of Telephus. Another picture represents a winged Mercury, with a child sitting on his shoulders across his neck, by whom is a woman sitting, and taking Mercury by the hand. This, we were told, was supposed to be Bacchus carried to nurse. Another piece represented Jupiter embracing Ganymede. Another, in which is a hunt of stags and swans. Three others, in each a Medusa's head. Another, representing two heads of imaginary animals; for never was the like on

earth, nor in the waters under the earth. Another beautiful one, representing two of the muses, one playing on the lyre, the other with a mask on her head. Another, with a lion, wood, and distant views. In another, various centaurs, buildings, &c. In another, a stag; over which is a bird flying, and seeming to beak at him. Two other small pictures of a dolphin. Another with architecture, and distant views. One with a peacock. Another with a temple, adorn'd with various pillars.

There are many others of less notice, which you will give me leave to omit, that I may mention other things, which have been found; namely, two large cornucopia's of bronze gilt; a large round shield of metal; two metal dishes; several lachrymatories of glass, others of earth; four large candlesticks of bronze; a large metal vase with a handle; many others of earth, curiously wrought: the foot of a lion most curious, but in marble, and which supported a marble table; a beautiful mascharron of metal, having the face of a cat, with a mouse in her mouth. There is also a very fine medallion, extremely well preserved, with a basso-relievo on both sides; on one is a woman, by whom is a man naked, killing a hog: on the reverse, is an old man, naked to his waist, sitting and playing on two pipes, which he holds in his hands. There is also another odd piece in basso-relievo, which represents a green parrot, drawn in a chariot, and driven by a green grasshopper, which sits on the box, as coachman. Whether this alluded to any thing, I could not learn; but I rather imagine it to be a whim of the artist.

Were I to recount all the things in particular, that I saw, it would fill up more paper by twenty times, than

than I have already scribbled. Let it suffice then, that there are many baskets and cases full of one thing and another, all jumbled together ; such as kitchen utensils, locks, bolts, rings, hinges, and all of brass. Things, that were of iron, were totally eaten up with rust. I was told, that when the workmen came to any thing of that sort, it moulder'd to dust as soon as they touch'd it ; occasion'd doubtless by the dampness of the earth, and the many ages it lay buried. I have little more to mention about the curiosities ; I will only tell you, that I was assured there were found many vases, and chrystral bottles full of water ; but that might penetrate thro' the earth, and fall into them, if not close stopp'd : also a sort of standish, or inkhorn, in which were found many stylets or pens, with which they wrote in those days. When it was first taken out, they say the ink had not only its natural colour, but that it was yet capable of tinging : it was very dry, when I touch'd it. There were eggs found quite whole, but empty ; also nuts and almonds ; grain of several sorts, beans and pease. I have by me some of it, which resembles beans of the size of coffee-berries burnt quite black. Many other sorts of fruit were found burnt quite to a coal, tho' otherwise whole and intire.

I will close this narrative, by declaring, that I cannot be of the sentiments of some, who assert, that this city was suddenly swallow'd up, which implies, that the earth must have open'd, and formed a pit to receive it. My opinion is, that it was overwhelmed with the boiling matter issuing from the mountain, at the time of the eruption. My reason for this conjecture is, that most things were found upright,

chiefly the buildings. That it was not a sudden overwhelming, and that the inhabitants had time to escape with their lives, tho' not with their goods, is proved, by their not finding dead bodies, where they have hitherto dug. It is said, some human bones were found, tho' few; which perhaps might belong to some miserable bedridden wretch or other, who could not escape, or of a person dying suddenly thro' fright; which I think is not difficult to imagine, when one considers what a scene of horror they must have had before their eyes.

Very little money or plate has been found, or any other portable thing of great value; which I think is another proof, that the inhabitants were not destroy'd. I doubt not, but before the violent eruption came on, the people for some days might perceive such tokens and signs, as could not but alarm them, and put them on their guard.

At the eruption, which happen'd in 1737, before it burst forth for some days, the inhabitants of Portici, and the adjacent villages, all retired; being by some signs apprised of the event. And I have been assured, that even for seven years before this last eruption, they were under daily apprehensions of it; but more so for the last four months of that time, as the mountain then scarce voided any smoke at all, and continual rumblings were heard from the body of the mountain, even at a great distance. The torrent of burning matter at this eruption took its course the opposite way from Portici or Herculaneum, and, as it happen'd, no village was damaged thereby. A convent of Carmelite friers, that stood in its paſſage, had a share of it; but what it most destroyed were corn-fields,

corn-fields, vineyards, and some woodlands, upon which the matter lay to a great thickness, and they say retain'd its heat for a long while. I was informed even by several, who had been on the spot 4 months after the eruption, that the matter (which they call the lava) was yet so hot, that they could not walk upon it: which shews it must be of a prodigious depth or thickness. This matter, it seems, is not of the same quality nor substance all the way thro' the body of it; for I observed, when I went to the theatre, as I descended, that the fides of the passage at the entrance were a sort of mould, 8 or 10 feet thick; after which appeared stone, of a blackish or dark-grey colour, to the thickness of about a yard or 4 feet; then another layer of sandy earth, under which was a layer of the same sort of stone; and that it continued *stratum super stratum*, till I got to the bottom. The theatre and the houses seem all to have been filled with earth, and being heavier at that instant than any other part, of which the matter was compounded, subsided first. I know a cubic block of stone is heavier than a lump of any earth of the same dimensions. Therefore you may imagine, that the stony part of the matter should precipitate first; but my notion is, that when this stony matter was liquified, and boiling with heat, it was lighter in proportion than the earthy part; and that the instant the boiling degree of heat was over, it could not gather its parts together quick enough to form a compact heavy body, before the earthy part subsided. I have examined this stone, and find it has not, everywhere, the same solidity. Reasons might be given for that, but I will not trouble you with them now:

I will

I will only tell you, that, in general, this stone is very hard and heavy, and that the whole city of Naples is paved with it. I have seen some of it, that will bear a fine polish, and of which they make snuff-boxes.

**XIX. A Letter to the President, concerning
the Hermaphrodite shewn in London: by
James Parsons M. D. F. R. S.**

SIR, Red-lion square, March 14, 1750.

Read March 14.
1750. **A**S I find the French girl, now shewn at Ludgate as an hermaphrodite, makes some noise in town, and as the generality of the world are apt in this very case to take the erroneous side of the question in giving their opinions about it, for want of having a proper knowledge of the parts, I have taken the liberty to trouble you with this letter, containing some account of the matter, which is intended to undeceive such as are mistaken about it.

She is now about eighteen years old, and the true description of her *pudenda* is as follows:

What is mistaken for a *penis* and has at first sight caused the deception, is the *clitoris*, grown to an inordinate size. The prepuce of this is continued down on each side, to form the *nymphæ*: under these the natural *urethra* is in its proper place, as in all females; and just under this is a natural *vagina*. This *vagina* is concealed by a skin growing up from the *perineum*, and continued to the *labium* of each side